

REMARKS

The non-final Office Action mailed December 30, 2003 has been reviewed and carefully considered. Claims 1-50 are pending in the application. Claims 1-50 were rejected. The specification has been amended. Claims 11, 26 and 41 are objected to. Claims 11, 26 and 41 have been amended.

In the first paragraph on page 2 of the Office Action, claims 11, 26 and 41 were objected to due to certain informalities.

Applicants respectfully traverse the objection to the claims. However, applicants have amended claims 11, 26 and 41. Applicants submit that amendments to the claims do not narrow or change the scope of applicants' application.

In the third paragraph on page 2 of the Office Action, claims 1-5, 16-20, 31-35 and 46-49 were rejected under § 102(e) over Yacoub (U.S. Patent No. 6,552,813).

In the third paragraph on page 5 of the Office Action, claims 6-12, 21-27, 36-42 and 50 were rejected under § 103(a) over Yacoub in view of Nagata (JP 411110163).

In the first paragraph on page 8 of the Office Action, claims 13-15, 28-30 and 43-45 were rejected under § 103(a) over Yacoub and Nagata in view of Olsen et al. (U.S. Publication No. 2002/0016921).

Applicants respectfully traverse the §§ 102(e) and 103(a) rejections. To establish a *prima facie* case for rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102, all the claim limitations must be taught, disclosed or suggested by the cited reference. To establish a *prima facie* case for rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), all the claim limitations must be taught or suggested by the cited prior art references, *see* M.P.E.P § 2143.01. In this instance, the requirements are not present and a *prima facie* rejection fails under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102(e) and 103(a) because the Office Action fails to cite a reference or references that teach, disclose or suggest all the claim limitations of Applicants' application.

The instant application focuses on a method and apparatus for processing print jobs, the apparatus including: "a multiplexer interface for determining attributes of a print channel associated with an incoming print job and receiving job description attributes of the incoming print job from the print channel; and a multiplexer processor component, interfaced with the

multiplexer interface, for managing the routing of the incoming print job based upon the attributes of the print channel and the job description attributes of the incoming print job.”

More specifically, the Applicants’ application requires “a multiplexer interface for determining attributes of a print channel associated with an incoming print job and receiving job description attributes of the incoming print job from the print channel.” Both incoming data and the channel the incoming data is sent from have attributes. The multiplexer interface receives attributes connected with the incoming print job and determines attributes of the print channel the incoming print job is sent through.

Yacoub, unlike the instant application, focuses on “directing print jobs in a network printing system.” In Yacoub, a server or virtual printer “receives preferences from a user regarding the print job such as image quality and/or speed. The virtual printer automatically determines which printer of the printers on the network comply with the print job preferences,” column 2, lines 10-13. The virtual printer in Yacoub merely receives preferences for the print job. The virtual printer does not determine attributes of the print channel the print job is sent from. Yacoub does not teach, disclose or suggest “a multiplexer interface for determining attributes of a print channel associated with an incoming print job and receiving job description attributes of the incoming print job from the print channel.”

Furthermore, the instant application requires “a multiplexer processor component, interfaced with the multiplexer interface, for managing the routing of the incoming print job based upon the attributes of the print channel and the job description attributes of the incoming print job.” The multiplexer interface manages logical connections between data channels and manages the job control functions of the system controller and spooler output paths. For example, when the print channel is a “print all” channel, and an output path is unavailable, the multiplexer interface can stop the flow of the print channel and restart the flow when an output path becomes available, thereby managing the routing of the print job based on the attributes of the print channel.

The server or virtual printer in Yacoub, on the other hand, “automatically determines which printer of the printers on the network comply with the print job preferences. The virtual printer then selects an appropriate printer which complies with the preferences and is located physically near the user/client,” column 2, lines 11-15. Yacoub only considers job preferences

when choosing a compliant printer and fails to take into consideration the attributes of the print channel. Yacoub fails to teach, disclose or suggest “a multiplexer processor component, interfaced with the multiplexer interface, for managing the routing of the incoming print job based upon the attributes of the print channel and the job description attributes of the incoming print job,” from the instant application.

Nagata fails to remedy the deficiencies of Yacoub. Nagata focuses on a print processor having “a spool-processing means to hold the printed output data sent through a network from the host terminal.” Nagata emphasizes aspects of output data and discusses data sent through a network only to the extent that data must be sent through a path to spool processing means. Nagata does not discuss print channel attributes. Therefore, Nagata fails to teach, disclose or suggest at least “a multiplexer interface for determining attributes of a print channel associated with an incoming print job and receiving job description attributes of the incoming print job from the print channel,” from the instant application.

Olsen too fails to remedy the deficiencies of both Yacoub and Nagata. Olsen focuses on a “system and method for ensuring secure transfer of a document from a client of a network to a printer.” Olsen fails to discuss print channel attributes. Olsen merely discusses attributes in the context of a “SetJobinfo” command, paragraph 0422, related to message information, and in the context of a “user attribute,” paragraphs 0469-0470, where “[o]n the server each user shall have an attribute describing the login procedure for submitting print jobs. User login attribute: Network, card, password.” Neither the “SetJobinfo” command nor the “user attribute” are related to print channel attributes from the instant application. Therefore, Olsen fails to teach, disclose or suggest “a multiplexer interface for determining attributes of a print channel associated with an incoming print job and receiving job description attributes of the incoming print job from the print channel.”

Because Yacoub, Nagata and Olsen, alone or in combination, fail to teach, disclose or suggest all of the elements of claims in the instant application, the rejections are improper. Accordingly, applicants request that the rejections be withdrawn.

Dependent claims 2-15, 17-30, 32-45 and 47-50 are also patentable over the references, because they incorporate all of the limitations of the corresponding independent claims 1, 16, 31 and 46. Further dependent claims 2-15, 17-30, 32-45 and 47-50 recite additional novel elements

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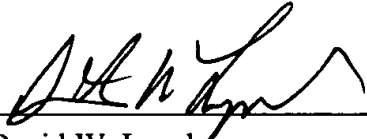
and limitations. Applicants reserve the right to argue independently the patentability of these additional novel aspects. Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that dependent claims 2-15, 17-30, 32-45 and 47-50 are patentable over the cited references.

On the basis of the above amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the claims are in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, reconsideration of this application and its allowance are requested.

If a telephone conference would be helpful in resolving any issues concerning this communication, please contact attorney for Applicants, David W. Lynch, at 651-686-6633 Ext. 116.

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